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New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 56 (*continued*)

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

(a) Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

(b) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.1)

(c) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.6)

(d) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

(e) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

(f) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

(g) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

(h) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.3)

(i) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Organization of la Francophonie

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

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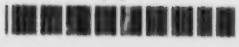

(j) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.5/Rev.1)

(k) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

(l) Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.13)

(m) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Note by the Secretary-General (A/59/297)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.8)

(n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

(o) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

(p) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.12)

(q) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.11)

(r) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Note by the Secretary-General (A/59/296)

Draft resolution (A/59/L.7)

(s) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303)

(t) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries

Mr. Grönberg (Finland): May I first underline that, although I am speaking here as a member of the Finnish delegation, I am also addressing this body in my capacity as Coordinator of activities to facilitate the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Mr. Wolfgang Hoffmann, has already given an account of the CTBTO's activities during the past year. I will, therefore, in my brief statement, concentrate on the activities to promote the entry into force of the Treaty.

The Treaty was adopted by the General Assembly on 10 September 1996 (resolution 50/245) and was opened for signature two weeks later on 24 September. Today, the Treaty has been signed by 173 States, including all five nuclear States, and has been ratified by 119. Regardless of the high acceptance the Treaty enjoys, it has not yet entered into force. For the Treaty to enter into force, the deposit of the instruments of ratification of 44 States listed in annex II to the Treaty is required. This rather exceptional rule was developed in order to guarantee that all those States which possessed nuclear knowledge would be bound by the Treaty. Of those 44 States whose ratification is required, 33 have ratified.

As it already seemed likely when the Treaty was negotiated that with this process for entry into force, additional efforts would be needed to guarantee entry into force, a mechanism to promote this was developed

in article XIV of the Treaty. Accordingly, the first Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, convened to consider measures to accelerate the ratification process, was held in Vienna in October 1999 under the presidency of Japan, the second in New York in November 2001 under the presidency of Mexico, and the third, under the presidency of Finland, in September 2003 in Vienna.

In the Final Declaration adopted by consensus at the Conference last year, the participating States stressed the importance of prompt signature and ratification by those whose ratification was needed for its entry into force but which had not yet ratified. It was noted that recent international events had made the Treaty's entry into force as urgent as when it had first been negotiated. The prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was one of the most important challenges facing the world. Furthermore, the Conference considered it essential to maintain momentum in building a verification regime capable of meeting the Treaty's verification requirements upon its entry into force. That verification system would be unprecedented in its global reach after entry into force and would thereby ensure that States were maintaining their Treaty commitments.

Despite the fact that the Treaty has not entered into force, its fundamental objective can be said to have been achieved insofar as all States have continued to refrain from detonating nuclear explosions. The Conference thus called upon all States to continue their moratoriums on nuclear weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions.

In adopting the Final Declaration, the Conference also adopted a list of concrete measures to be taken to promote the early entry into force of the Treaty. This is a novel approach, which I hope will serve its purpose and bring us a bit closer to the Treaty's entry into force. The list consists of 12 measures. They need not be enumerated here, as they can be found in the declaration. I would, however, like to highlight a few of them. Finland was elected to serve as coordinator in order "to promote cooperation, through informal consultations with all interested countries aimed at promoting further signatures and ratifications". There is already a tradition of appointing the country that has served as chairman for the article XIV Conference to act as the coordinator. There are two new measures that have significantly broadened the resources available for promotional activities and which are important innovations.

First, it was decided to establish a contact list of countries that have already ratified the Treaty to serve as volunteers to assist the coordinator in various regions. On the basis of that list of volunteers, the following countries were chosen as regional coordinators: for Africa, South Africa; for Eastern Europe, Ukraine; for Latin America, Chile and Venezuela; for North America and Western Europe, Austria, Canada and Spain; and for South-East Asia and the Pacific, Japan, Korea and the Philippines. The role played by those regional coordinators has been most encouraging. They have been able to keep the question of ratification on the agendas of various regional summits and seminars and of other high-level political meetings, and thus to raise awareness of the importance of the Treaty.

Secondly, it was agreed that ratifying States would consider appointing a special representative to assist the coordinating State in its function of promoting the entry into force of the Treaty. Consequently, the States parties elected Ambassador Jaap Ramaker from the Netherlands as the Special Representative to assist the coordinating country. Through his visits, Ambassador Ramaker will encourage those countries that have not yet ratified the Treaty to do so. He will provide the States he visits with background information on the significance of the Treaty, including on its role and function in the wider context of nuclear arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

I would like to draw attention to a meeting which took place here a month ago, on 23 September 2004. On the initiative of the Foreign Ministers of Japan, Australia, the Netherlands and Finland, Foreign Ministers and other high-level representatives from 45 countries met and signed a statement in which they appealed to all countries that had not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay. They furthermore called upon all countries to continue a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions. That meeting was the second of its kind. The first had taken place two years earlier, also here in New York, in September 2002. After the meeting, countries that had not been able to attend were offered the opportunity to associate themselves with the statement. As a result, a total of 64 countries

have decided to adhere to it. Two years ago the number of countries associated with the statement was 50.

The Treaty enjoys broad support. That has been demonstrated both by the high-level attendance at the meetings and by the number of signatures and ratifications. Nevertheless, the Treaty has not yet entered into force. But the wide support for the Treaty makes us confident that we will succeed in reaching the final goal, although much still remains to be done, especially considering the ongoing preparations for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

As the coordinator for the activities to facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT, Finland appeals to all signatory States to join forces to remove the obstacles still preventing it. By convincing all those States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty of its importance, we shall ensure the Treaty's entry into force.

Mrs. Lima da Veiga (Cape Verde) (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour for me to be participating in this debate on agenda item 56 — "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations" — on the basis of the excellent report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303). The report shows that the new partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations is of particular importance as we move towards our common goals, including the promotion of peace, stability and development. That cooperation is also in line with our desire to revitalize the Organization and is essential to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

In 1994, the Secretary-General introduced the practice of convening regular meetings between senior officials of the United Nations and leaders of regional organizations. That practice has proven very useful because it helps to strengthen inter-regional dialogue, promotes the sharing of experience and creates desirable synergies among the various programmes. We believe that this cooperation will continue to increase not only because of the resources made available, but also because of the creativity of the various players as they carry out the recommendations and implement the follow-up plans arising from those meetings.

The delegation of Cape Verde associates itself with the statement made by Nigeria on behalf of Africa. We welcome cooperation between the African Union and the African regional organizations in many spheres. That cooperation has enabled us to identify a common approach and to find complementarity in such areas as conflict management, peace-building and peacekeeping, and the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries emerging from conflict and the Secretary-General's Office of the Special Adviser on Africa are all welcome initiatives that contribute to strengthening that cooperation.

Cape Verde is a member of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP). I am pleased to support the statement made yesterday morning by the representative of Sao Tome and Principe on behalf of the member States of the Community. As the Assembly will recall, that statement dealt with the desire of Portuguese-speaking countries for cooperation between the United Nations and the Community to be formally established, in the spirit of the Charter and the various General Assembly resolutions on the need to strengthen contacts and identify areas of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations.

Although it is not a traditional so-called regional organization, the CPLP is an intergovernmental organization that brings together eight member countries from four continents that share a common language and history and, above all, common interests. The organization is based on three main pillars: reaching political and diplomatic agreement, cooperating on development matters and promoting the Portuguese language. The CPLP's overall goals are to promote peace, democracy, the rule of law, human rights and social justice. Because it promotes inter-regional dialogue, the organization has concluded cooperation agreements with other regional entities, as well as with agencies of the United Nations system. Despite its short history, it has already had positive experiences, working in close cooperation with other regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States, managing crises and promoting peace in some of its member countries.

It is therefore my hope that the draft resolution on this matter to be introduced at this meeting will be supported by all Member States.

Mr. Katsareas (Greece): Greece wholeheartedly supports the cooperation of the United Nations with regional organizations. That cooperation has proved fruitful in many fields, and has become a very useful instrument in addressing the many regional problems of our times.

I want to refer especially to the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC). Greece is a founding member of the group, as well as the sole country among its 12 member States to be a full member of the European Union. Greece will assume the chairmanship of BSEC as of 29 October. My country, as a future chair of the organization, will do its best both to promote its goals and to strengthen its standing in the family of international organizations, especially those related to the United Nations system.

As a regional economic organization, BSEC covers a geographic area encompassing the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Black Sea littoral States. BSEC aims at contributing to regional and international peace, security, stability and welfare by developing economic and trade relations between its member States. It has become a forum for discussion and cooperation on areas ranging from energy to transport and from trade, economic development, the environment and tourism to agriculture, small- and medium-sized enterprises, combating crime and terrorism and emergency relief.

Although BCEC is not directly involved in peacekeeping and conflict management, it renders its contribution to peace and security through economic cooperation and through the implementation of so-called soft security measures. Since its transformation into an international organization, BSEC has taken important steps towards the elaboration and promotion of projects enjoying a high level of regional cooperation and developmental impact in the BSEC region. In that context, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303) which deals, inter alia, with the cooperation between the United Nations and BSEC. We also support his recommendations that the United Nations and all specialized agencies, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system should continue to hold consultations with BSEC and formulate and implement programmes pertaining to areas of common interest.

In conclusion, I welcome the presence among us of the Acting Secretary General of BSEC, Ambassador Tugay Uluçevik, who will deliver a statement on behalf of the Organization.

Mr. Danesh-Yazdi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Let me begin by joining previous speakers in expressing my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his inclusive and informative reports submitted under agenda item 56, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations". While we are discussing this agenda item today, I wish to confine my remarks to the report that deals with the cooperation between the United Nations and three organizations with which the Islamic Republic of Iran has the privilege of being more closely associated, namely, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO).

Representing the Islamic world as its collective voice, OIC is one of the largest intergovernmental organizations, the main aim of which is to enhance solidarity and cooperation among all its members in various fields and to make an effective contribution to the international community's endeavours in pursuit of peace and development. Over the years, OIC has been engaged in constructive and fruitful cooperation with the United Nations and other international organizations.

In the same spirit, we have noted the Secretary-General's encouraging words on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, which form a part of his report in document A/59/303. They indicate that, during the period under review, consultations at all levels continued to be conducted on a regular basis between the United Nations and OIC on a wide range of issues, including those of a political, economic, social and humanitarian nature.

We welcome the continuation of the effective contacts and consultations between the United Nations and OIC on a number of highly important political issues, particularly those pertaining to Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine and the Sudan. We also welcome their cooperation in the past two years on the subjects of conflict prevention and the fight against terrorism.

It is also encouraging to note that cooperation between the United Nations system and the Organization of the Islamic Conference is increasing in

a wide range of socio-economic areas of mutual interest. In that context, the general meeting between the two sides to evaluate the existing mechanisms of cooperation between the United Nations and OIC and their institutions, which was held at the United Nations Office at Vienna from 13 to 15 July 2004, was a welcome initiative. It produced a number of proposals and decisions on a series of joint projects to be implemented by the institutions in areas such as science, technology, trade, food security, agriculture, human resources development, the environment, health, the arts and education.

We have also noted with satisfaction that the United Nations and its institutions have continued to carry out joint activities and to exchange information with the specialized and affiliated institutions and subsidiary organs of the OIC, including the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Statistical, Economic and Social Research Training Centre for Islamic Countries, the Islamic Development Bank and the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade, in support of social, economic and cultural development. Given the ever-increasing importance of Islamic countries in the political, economic and social equations of today's world, we firmly believe that the expansion of cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC has become all the more instrumental for the maintenance of global peace and security.

Turning to the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), we found it encouraging that, according to the report of the Secretary-General, the various bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system and the secretariat of the ECO have continued their endeavours to expand the scope of their cooperation in a variety of areas. We believe that the existing pace of cooperation, including on joint programmes and projects, between ECO and various United Nations bodies should be accelerated and encouraged within the United Nations system.

In that context, the United Nations Development Programme should be more involved in the area of capacity-building with the ECO secretariat and its relevant programmes. We have noted with satisfaction that, in the period under review, cooperation between the ECO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in the area of transit transport has been expanding and, at the same time, continues to encompass the areas of regional investment and trade efficiency. The measures taken by the International Trade Centre to extend its technical cooperation to boost business and trade within the region, including by encouraging the participation of the business community in exchanging views with the leaders of ECO member States, has been a very useful initiative that deserves proper attention.

We are pleased to learn from the report that the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) continues to play an active role in the ECO region through the provision of technical assistance, capacity-building in the economic fields, the networking of trade and investment, information exchanges and multinational, multi-modal and transit transport. Indeed, there are still enormous opportunities to extend such cooperation between ESCAP and the ECO to other areas. The new phases of cooperation between the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and the ECO to coordinate control over illicit drugs, the cooperation of the United Nations Population Fund with ECO to address HIV/AIDS and adolescent health and the Food and Agriculture Organization's cooperation with the ECO in the development of the agricultural sector and food security are but a few other samples of solid cooperation between the United Nations and the ECO that deserve to be welcomed and further strengthened.

The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), is a dynamic body that provides an opportunity to a large number of Asian and African countries to actively contribute to the prevalence of the rule of law in international relations. It has undertaken various studies on international legal subjects of common concern to the two continents. In cooperation with the United Nations, that organization has also played a significant role in harmonizing the positions of Asian and African countries with regard to international legal issues.

As the report of the Secretary-General illustrates, the commitment of the AALCO to cooperate effectively with the United Nations system has continued in the period under review through systematic and consistent analysis of the agenda items of the Sixth Committee and the International Law Commission. The commentaries and recommendations of the organization remain a source of knowledge for its member States in their deliberations on issues before the General Assembly and continue to be reflected, directly or indirectly, in the proceedings of

United Nations legal bodies. The wide range of topics on the agenda of that consultative organization is a clear illustration of the capacity and resolve of the organization to contribute positively to collective efforts aimed at tackling the new challenges facing the international community.

The AALCO continues to maintain on its agenda the issues of refugees, trade law, crime prevention and combating corruption, all of which also rank high on the United Nations agenda. We are also pleased at the fact that, during recent years, new avenues have been identified for improved and strengthened cooperation between the AALCO and United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and relevant subsidiary bodies. We hope that those efforts will produce a positive and fruitful outcome. Indeed, those developments should be welcomed and further enhanced.

We need to mobilize all the resources and tools at our disposal to address the tremendous global challenges facing humankind. Undoubtedly, the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is a key element in that respect. My delegation believes that expanding relations between the United Nations and regional and other organizations — including the OIC, the ECO and the AALCO — through high-level contacts, regular consultations and technical meetings could serve that noble objective and contribute to the fulfilment of the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Mr. Tesfu (Ethiopia): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations, contained in document A/59/303. We believe this debate will contribute to our efforts by helping us to review the achievements made thus far and by informing our decisions on future cooperation.

The close follow-up by the Secretary-General and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa has contributed significantly to furthering the efforts of the African Union. Specifically, the Office of the Special Adviser has made a special contribution to furthering those efforts.

The United Nations has hosted a training programme on the drafting of the protocol on the establishment of Peace and Security Council of the African Union and of its rules of procedure. I would like to recall that the Peace and Security Council was officially launched in Addis Ababa in May 2004. The United Nations has also contributed to strengthening the other structures of the African Union. We appreciate that and the other contributions provided by the United Nations to our continental organization.

Ethiopia recognizes the United Nations for its consistent engagement in peacekeeping operations in Africa in general and in the Horn of Africa in particular. Ethiopia notes the fundamental change in the perception and concept of peacekeeping operations, which now address issues such as the establishment of the institutions needed to ensure the rule of law, the enforcement of human rights, the reintegration of troops and internally displaced persons and the rehabilitation of infrastructure in countries emerging from conflict.

Africa still faces several conflict situations that are hindering progress towards peace, security and prosperity. We believe that the Peace and Security Council of the African Union will be a useful tool to increase cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in the area of conflict prevention.

The African Union has also demonstrated its willingness to tackle conflict in the continent, in support of the United Nations, through the deployment of forces in new and expanding peacekeeping activities, both within the United Nations context and in the regional framework.

In conclusion, although there is a clear demonstration of political will on the part of African countries to confront the challenges, the African Union still faces a shortage of financial and technical resources. We believe that improved cooperation with the United Nations will facilitate the provision of the required assistance in all aspects.

Mr. Cools (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): During this joint debate I should like to refer to sub-item (j) of agenda item 56, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union".

Belgium attaches great overall importance to opening up our Organization's work to the outside world. Our debates in this forum, as well as the resolutions we adopt, would have no meaning unless they were made known to public opinion and the civil societies of our countries. It is also important that our work benefit from the contributions of civil society. Genuine revitalization of the General Assembly will

only occur if we take into account that essential opening up.

National parliaments have a particular role to play in civil societies. As representatives elected by the whole of the population, parliamentarians serve in a sense as interpreters for the people. They are the link between the international and local levels, and between the concerns and expectations of people around the world and the decisions we take here.

Let us not forget that the Charter begins with the words "We the peoples of the United Nations". Our Organization must maintain contact with the peoples and continue to listen to them, in particular through their elected representatives. The Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations are important partners in that regard. Belgium is pleased to note the incremental strengthening in recent years in the cooperation between the two organizations, as can be seen in the Secretary-General's report. We hope that that cooperation will continue to be strengthened in the future.

In that regard, my delegation attaches particular importance to the holding, at New York in September 2005, of the second Conference of Presiding Officers of National Parliaments, which will be a joint meeting with the United Nations. We believe that it is important that the Conference be held under the auspices of the United Nations in order to tangibly strengthen the links between the two organizations.

Belgium fully supports the draft resolution contained in document A/59/L.5, which was put forward by Chile and which we also have co-sponsored. In that regard, my delegation would like to emphasize that the text of the draft resolution was the subject of extensive consultations and that it was amended to take into account the views expressed during those consultations. We therefore hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Martirosyan (Armenia): First of all, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for the informative reports he has submitted to us.

Today we are seeing that growing globalization also has effects on international organizations. On the one hand, those organizations complement each other's activities; and, on the other hand, they sometimes overlap and duplicate each other. We also see increased involvement on the part of international non-governmental organizations in current global processes, often competing with traditional intergovernmental bodies. At the same time, new threats and challenges are emerging, forcing a review of the objectives and operational capacities of international and regional organizations. It is therefore not surprising that almost all organizations are currently considering some kind of reform or review process to enable them to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century and adapt to new realities.

The issue of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations has now been considered by the General Assembly for many years, and that discussion is expanding in scope and essence by gaining new inputs and ideas. That is a welcome change that reflects current world developments.

We have seen this agenda item grow, just as we have seen an increase in the number of regional organizations. That is a reflection of the international community's acknowledgement of the importance of those organizations, their complementary character and the contributions they can make to our common efforts aimed at finding solutions to global challenges. Moreover, that is a recognition that regional organizations bring knowledge and expertise pertinent to the region in which they are involved, with detailed and profound understanding of the developments in, and specificities of, their respective regions and, sometimes, even their ways of dealing with those problems.

Armenia has extensive cooperation with a number of the regional organizations under discussion today. I would like to touch upon several of them.

The priorities that are being dealt with in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe are concomitant with the issues currently on the United Nations agenda. In that context, we welcome the ongoing cooperation within the framework of the tripartite process of informal consultations among the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. Active cooperation among those regional organizations helps to address issues of concern locally and to advance the cause globally.

During the past 12 years, Armenia has developed valuable cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. That cooperation

covers diverse areas: from mediation towards a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to issues of economic and environmental dimension. It also covers the subjects of security frameworks, assistance in electoral processes, anti-corruption activities and many others.

The joint meeting in Armenia in May 2004 on environmental and security issues in the south Caucasus, organized by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the OSCE, was a good example of cooperation between regional and international organizations in the region. The meeting aimed at identifying areas where the decline in environmental protection could pose a threat to human security and result in conflicting situations, creating instability in the region.

The fight against corruption also seems to be a feasible area for cooperation between the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. Major attention is given to this issue within the OSCE vis-à-vis newly independent States. In May 2003, Armenia hosted a national conference on the fight against money laundering and the financing of terrorism. That meeting was organized by the Armenian Government, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Bank and the OSCE, in close collaboration with the Council of Europe. Each of those organizations had a valuable contribution to make in the fight against that scourge by applying their expertise and knowledge. That was an excellent example of cooperation among those organizations and Member States towards achieving common goals.

At the beginning of this year, Armenia assumed the chairmanship of the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation for the first time. During our tenure in the Chair, the security dialogue continued as an ingredient in the overall approach to confidence-building measures. There were extensive discussions on the draft decision on standard elements of end-user certificates and the verification procedures for the export of small arms and light weapons. A decision was also adopted on OSCE principles for export controls of man-portable air defence systems. Those issues are today becoming items for discussion in the First Committee.

The OSCE is one of the few organizations to deal extensively with conflict prevention and resolution. A number of regional conflicts are under its consideration. One such conflict in need of peaceful settlement is that of Nagorno-Karabakh, the resolution of which is one of the OSCE's important mandates, exercised through the Minsk Group. The personal representative of the Chairman-in-Office conducts monthly monitoring in the area of the conflict and presents his monthly reports to the OSCE. The United Nations and the Secretary-General also receive regular reporting on the situation by the Minsk Group.

The Nagorno-Karabakh peace process has its ups and downs, yet it seems to be picking up some speed now. The Armenian Government fully supports the efforts of the co-chairpersons of the Minsk Group. We also express our hope for a just and lasting solution to that protracted conflict.

Several statements emphasized the consequences of the conflicts in our region, often presenting a distorted picture and ignoring their root causes. However, we think that the role of regional organizations such as the OSCE is to create a favourable environment in which to address root causes and eliminate the consequences of Stalinist national policies. That would make possible the establishment of durable peace and stability in the region. We strongly believe that only a comprehensive approach to those complex issues will allow us to overcome the totalitarian legacy.

In its conflict prevention and post-conflict rehabilitation efforts, the OSCE has accumulated vast experience in the area of confidence-building measures. It is well known that implementation of such measures requires combined efforts and persistence to move ahead. In that respect, the contribution of regional organizations in the establishment and advancement of regional cooperation is exceptional.

Armenia firmly believes that the rule of law and respect for human rights are indispensable to achieving lasting peace, stability and security. In that regard, we attach particular importance to the work of the Council of Europe, which has unique experience in promoting the universal values of human rights and democracy.

With the accession of all the States of the Southern Caucasus to the Council of Europe, our region has been embraced in the pan-European family. We believe that membership has not only ensured the irreversibility of the democratic processes in individual countries, but that it will also have far-reaching

positive effects for the stabilization of the situation in the region.

In conclusion, I would like to welcome the continued cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States. I am pleased to inform the Assembly that Armenia is in the final stage of considering its observer status with that organization. In that respect, I would like to thank all the countries that rendered their support to us.

Mr. Shin Kak-soo (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations (A/59/303). The Republic of Korea has attached importance to greater cooperation and interaction between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. A holistic approach encompassing both global and regional perspectives is therefore vital if we are to fully address the many issues of common concern.

Global issues such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and environmental degradation are so far-reaching that they affect distinct geographical regions in different ways. Accordingly, regional organizations are often well suited to offer region-specific remedies and approaches that can reinforce global efforts to address those issues. In that regard, the United Nations should further continue to pursue the strengthening of cooperation with regional and other organizations.

I would now like to draw the Assembly's attention to the regional organizations and arrangements in East Asia that are of specific interest to us.

As a full dialogue partner of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Republic of Korea welcomes increasing the interaction and interface between the United Nations and ASEAN. The annual conference on conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building that has been held jointly by ASEAN and the United Nations since 2001 is an excellent example of close cooperation between the two institutions. Furthermore, we welcome and support the decision of the ASEAN ministerial meeting this year to give active consideration to requesting observer status at the United Nations.

My delegation sees great potential for close cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations on security matters. The ASEAN seminar held in Jakarta in February this year discussed the idea of an ASEAN security community. At that meeting, the discussion centred on how the United Nations could use its extensive resources and experience to help ASEAN strengthen its ability to deal with regional security issues, including non-traditional issues. In our view, joint activities related to humanitarian assistance, preventive measures and an early warning system merit further consideration.

My country emphasizes the importance of the partnership between ASEAN and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) noted in the Secretary-General's report. The ASEAN-UNDP Partnership aims to help narrow the development gap both within ASEAN countries and between ASEAN and other regions of the world, as well as to integrate ASEAN more broadly into the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the World Trade Organization and other multilateral institutions. We support that valuable partnership, which particularly focuses on bridging the development gap, and expect its continued development.

The ASEAN Regional Forum currently assumes an important role in strengthening Asia-Pacific political and security cooperation. The Forum also pursues increased cooperation with the United Nations on political and security cooperation, particularly in the areas of preventive diplomacy and peace-building. We hope to see the Forum build up its capacity in coordinating inter-Asian security matters, in close partnership with the United Nations.

The Republic of Korea strongly believes in the importance of cooperation between the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the United Nations. The IPU, an excellent forum in which citizens' voices can be heard, has been an essential link between the citizens of the world — as represented by their parliamentarians — and the United Nations. Moreover, national parliaments play a vital role as the central institutions that adapt and translate global norms and agreements into domestic laws.

In that regard, we reaffirm our support for IPU efforts to provide greater parliamentary contributions and enhanced support to the United Nations. Furthermore, we fully endorse the IPU's efforts to

consult parliamentarians on the recommendations made by the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations-Civil Society Relations, in order to engage parliamentarians in the work of the United Nations in a more systematic way.

In conclusion, my delegation looks forward to increased cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other international organizations with a view to reinforcing each other's capacities and achieving synergistic outcomes.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with resolution 44/6 of 17 October 1989, I give the floor to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Terry Davis.

Mr. Davis (Council of Europe): I am proud to stand before the Assembly today as the new Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

The United Nations and the Council of Europe share the same goals. At the Council of Europe, we are committed to the ideals and principles enshrined in the founding Charter of the United Nations. The cause of the United Nations is the cause of the Council of Europe.

The Council of Europe today encompasses more than 800 million men, women and children throughout our continent of Europe. Many live in societies in the throes of rapid social, economic and political transition. Many are abused and brutalized. Others are victims of armed conflict and discrimination, and live in socially excluded and marginalized families. Their plight makes a mockery of social justice and human rights. The same applies to many more millions outside Europe.

In response, we must all join forces to build fair and free societies in which peace, human rights and the rule of law can flourish and thrive. These are global issues and global concerns; they call for global responses. But if such responses are to be effective, they must be based on grass-roots support. That is where the Council of Europe and other regional bodies come in.

Like the United Nations, the Council of Europe was born out of the ashes of the Second World War. Reconciliation, reconstruction and the prevention of new conflicts are the hallmark of the Council's statutory mission. It was conceived as a structure to foster ever greater unity among its member States, on an equal footing, through the widest possible cooperation and joint standard-setting.

Not only does the Council of Europe share the causes and concerns of the United Nations, but in many areas we have a common agenda. That is another reason why I am proud to address the Assembly today as the representative neither of the old Europe nor of the new Europe, but of one Europe which shares a common commitment to make the world a better, fairer and safer place. I am equally proud to have listened to several members of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly who have already taken part in this debate and given it a parliamentary dimension.

One of the most striking examples of cooperation and complementarity between our two organizations in the past was the conclusion in 1950 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The European Convention is directly and expressly derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and remains one of the foremost examples of the implementation of the Universal Declaration's values on a regional level.

Today, through the European Court of Human Rights, it offers protection to people in all of our 46 member States. The Council of Europe brings together those countries on the basis of a commitment to implement, together, the principles of human rights, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law and of sharing collective responsibility for safeguarding and promoting those principles.

In the course of our work, we have developed excellent cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on issues such as the status of refugees and the treatment of asylum seekers and displaced persons in Europe. Needless to say, we stand ready to extend and deepen our cooperation with the United Nations in this field.

One of the gravest threats to human rights today is terrorism, which strikes indiscriminately across our planet, as the people of New York and the staff of the United Nations know only too well. We in Europe also carry the scars of terrorist attacks. During this year alone, terrible terrorist atrocities have been perpetrated in Russia, in Spain and in Turkey. Terrorism is not a new experience for us, but the scale and ferocity of the most recent attacks, coming so soon after the atrocities in Indonesia and other countries elsewhere in the

world, have increased our determination to put the campaign against terrorism at the top of our agenda.

Terrorism requires intensive cooperation between Governments and between international organizations, but we must not use the need for partnership as an excuse to neglect our individual responsibilities. The Council of Europe, for its part, has adopted a threefold approach based on increased legal cooperation, respect for human rights and the promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue.

The obligation to take appropriate measures to protect fundamental human rights by trying to prevent terrorist attacks is reflected in 11 Council of Europe conventions, ranging from special measures to deal with cybercrime and money laundering to a straightforward attempt to combat that evil by means of an updated convention on the suppression of terrorism.

Of course, combating terrorism requires a proper balance between legitimate measures to counter terrorist acts and protect the lives of men, women and children on the one hand, and the need to protect other human rights and fundamental freedoms on the other. That is why the Council of Europe has also adopted special guidelines — the Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism. They represent the first-ever international legal instrument on this issue.

We must defend the values for which we stand. We must combat terrorism. But we must do so in accordance with international law, including the laws affecting human rights and the treatment of refugees. If we behave like terrorists, we will destroy our own credibility, we will descend to their level and we will increase support for them.

As the Council of Europe's Committee on the Prevention of Torture recently put it, any State that authorizes or condones acts by its officials which amount to either torture or inhuman or degrading treatment diminishes its standing in the eyes of the international community. The same can be said of a State that makes use of statements that officials of another country have obtained through resort to such acts.

We must be constantly vigilant if the absolute prohibition of torture is to be upheld. This is true not only for Europe, it is true the world over. To abandon universally recognized values can only undermine the foundations of democratic societies committed to the rule of law.

That is why the Council of Europe attaches so much importance to the International Criminal Court. It is our firm position that the Court must have global jurisdiction, and that no country should be exempt from it. Since the creation of the Court, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has constantly encouraged our member States and observer States to ratify the Statute of the Court. Forty-four States members of the Council of Europe have now signed the Rome Statute, and 38 of them have ratified it. We expect the rest to do so in the near future.

The events of 11 September 2001 and subsequent events, including the recent tragedy of Beslan, have also underscored the need to address the rights of victims and their families. That is why we are currently engaged in drafting additional guidelines in response to this need, and I very much hope they, too, will provide a point of reference. However, if we are to deal with those factors which may encourage terrorism, we cannot do so in just one country or one continent. We must break down cultural and religious barriers and talk with each other to foster mutual understanding, reduce prejudice and promote a universal commitment to the same fundamental values.

In that context, at the Council of Europe we are strengthening our cooperation with the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Only two weeks ago, the Director General of the Islamic Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization was in Strasbourg to launch a series of joint projects.

Dialogue is also a prerequisite for fighting racism and xenophobia. Here the Council of Europe has been particularly active through our European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, which is an independent watchdog dealing with human rights issues in those areas.

The forthcoming entry into force of Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, which includes a general prohibition on discrimination, is another important step by the Council of Europe. It will implement the recommendations of the Durban World Conference against Racism.

Another milestone in the protection of human rights in Europe was the entry into force last year of

Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention on Human Rights. This protocol committed our members to the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances. I am proud to report to you today that since none of our 46 member States now resort to capital punishment, I am the representative of a genuine death-penalty-free zone. We look forward to the day when the representatives of other continents can say the same thing.

The Council of Europe is also active in many other areas, and, in several cases, cross-fertilization with the United Nations has proved beneficial for both of us. I give only the four following examples of this: fighting trafficking in human beings; combating violence against children and the sexual exploitation of children; upholding the rights and dignity of people with disabilities; and promoting the participation of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building. In all these fields, we have worked and will continue to work closely with the United Nations.

However, promoting and defending human rights and the rule of law is not just a question of drawing up appropriate texts. What is of vital importance is ensuring that they are implemented and apply to all.

That is why I welcome the recent agreement between the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Council of Europe on the application in Kosovo of the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and our Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The conclusion of this agreement not only confirms UNMIK's commitment to the standards of the Council of Europe but will also allow our monitoring bodies to examine how UNMIK and the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government have put these standards into practice.

Our European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment will have unlimited access to any place within Kosovo where persons under the authority of UNMIK are deprived of their liberty. However, before we can start our activities in Kosovo, similar arrangements must be concluded with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization for places of detention administered by the Kosovo Force.

Turning to other areas of our responsibility, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Council of Europe is currently celebrating 50 years of European cultural cooperation in support of democratic values. We have designated 2005 as the European Year of Citizenship through Education. The Year is intended to draw attention to the crucial contribution of education, both formal and informal, the development of active citizenship, the quality of participation in a democratic society and the development of democratic culture. It will be the beginning of a sustainable process and is linked to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education.

Cooperation and interaction between our two organizations covers many other areas and locations. I should certainly have said something about our contacts with the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia, which has been in regular contact with the Council of Europe and has been most helpful to our visiting delegations.

I could have explained how, along with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, we meet annually with the United Nations. Allow me to say how much I am looking forward to being the host for our next tripartite meeting in Strasbourg in February, when we will look into how we can work together on promoting the rule of law and addressing some of the threats to freedom of the media.

I would have liked to have spent more time telling you about the interest of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in strengthening the United Nations as mapped out in a resolution adopted in February. Our parliamentarians welcome the forward-looking attitude of Secretary-General Annan and fully back the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which he set up. Our parliamentarians also advocate the introduction of a parliamentary dimension into the work of the General Assembly and a reform of the Security Council to make it more representative.

I must add a brief reference to the World Summit on the Information Society, to which our Committee of Ministers addressed a message before last year's Geneva meeting. We reaffirmed the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights and their importance for democracy, the rule of law and sustainable development, and we underscored the Council of Europe's determination to maintain and strengthen these values in the development of the information society.

I could and should have said more about the importance of migration and the role that multilateral bodies can play in building bridges and understanding between the cultures and peoples of the world. Like Secretary-General Annan, we wish to create a human rights framework that recognizes the disparities of wealth between the North and the South and that recognizes the legitimate rights of people to migrate in search of a better life.

As I hope you have seen, the Council of Europe and the United Nations share the same goals. We are working together to achieve them. Your cause is our cause.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with General Assembly resolution 477 (V) of 1 November 1950, I now call on the observer for the League of Arab States.

Mr. Mahmassani (League of Arab States) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a pleasure for me to express my warmest congratulations to you on your election to the presidency of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I would like to take this opportunity to express my most sincere congratulations to the president of the fifty-eighth session for his wise conduct of the work of the previous session. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the report presented on the close multidisciplinary cooperation between the League of Arab States and the United Nations in facing the dangers and challenges that threaten world peace and security.

The League of Arab States and its specialized agencies believe that we must continue to strengthen and intensify cooperation between the United Nations and the specialized agencies in all areas, as mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303). The cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States from 2002 to 2004 has covered all areas of activity, including a meeting between the United Nations and the League of Arab States and their specialized agencies. A conference was also held on the Arab States' implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights set up an expert committee for the Arab region to comment on the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which was adopted at the Arab Summit held in May 2004 in Tunis.

There has also been cooperation between the United Nations, its funds and programmes and the League of Arab States in the areas of development and population and with the World Bank in the areas of human development and the infrastructure of knowledge. The International Civil Aviation Organization, the Arab committee on civil aviation, the International Telecommunication Union, the World Health Organization and the League of Arab States have also continued to cooperate in a number of areas in which they are competent. An agreement between the League of Arab States and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been signed as well as a new cooperation programme that includes an agreement on practical activities in the area of promoting tolerance and dialogue and communication.

The League of Arab States has also participated in the United Nations programmes for the fight against drug trafficking. We have held seminars to encourage the adoption of international instruments to fight terrorism and the ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols. A sectoral meeting between the United Nations and the Arab League on financing the Millennium Development Goals will take place in December in Italy.

The Arab League's efforts to strengthen cooperation with the United Nations in all areas aim to promote consultations and the study of all possible ways to apply the Organization's resolutions, be they in the area of disarmament, the fight against terrorism or the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

One of the Arab League's priorities is to find a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that would be in accordance with international law, the Madrid terms of reference, and the Arab peace initiative, by strengthening cooperation between the two organizations to face up to global perils and threats, to bring about peace and security in the region and to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in accordance with General Assembly resolutions on the subject.

Cooperation between the League of Arab States and the United Nations is based on Arab heritage and culture, which call for tolerance and peaceful coexistence with others.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/2 of 13 October 1980, I now call on the Secretary-General of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization, Mr. Wafik Kamil.

Mr. Kamil (Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization) (*spoke in French*): As Secretary-General of an Asian-African organization and as a son of Africa, welcome the fact that you, Sir, a son of Africa yourself, are guiding the work of the General Assembly as it moves through a very critical period of dealing with hotspots and great challenges to the peace and security that are so sorely needed in order to ensure development. I am confident that under your presidency, the Assembly will attain the noble purposes of this session.

(*spoke in English*)

Allow me also to pay a cordial tribute to His Excellency Mr. Julian Robert Hunte, President of the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session. Since this agenda item is a biennial one, I was not here last year to congratulate him. Our full appreciation and gratitude also go to Secretary-General Kofi Annan and his staff for their continuous hard work and commitment. Mr. Annan's efforts towards global peace and stability are an inspiration to us all. We thank him for his excellent report contained in document A/59/303, which gives clear guidelines for consideration of agenda item 56 (a) to (t).

On behalf of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), it is a great honour for me to address the General Assembly, which is rightly considered to be the parliament of world. This session is taking place on the eve of the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. As we all know, the United Nations was set up at the end of the Second World War, primarily to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Despite the fact that the scourge of war remains — with both inter-State and intra-State conflicts taking place in many parts of the world, and with the rising menace of international terrorism — one can confidently assert, after reflecting upon the past six decades, that today the United Nations, with its specialized agencies, is carrying out diverse activities that are helping to realize the aspirations and hopes of the peoples of the United Nations in diverse areas. These include the promotion of human rights, assistance to refugees, protection of the environment, the advancement of education, securing health for all, improving trade relations between States, and so forth, all with the ultimate aim of making our planet Earth a peaceful and a better place to live for present and succeeding generations.

The United Nations, its specialized agencies, other international organizations and regional organizations are the only instruments available for effectively responding to the current challenges. The complexity of global problems has turned the United Nations into a special setting for developing fruitful cooperation. Close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations is a decisive factor in meeting the challenges faced by the international community. That is where the raison d'être for organizations such as AALCO lies. AALCO has endeavoured since its inception to act as a forum for an exchange of views among Asian and African countries on issues of international law and, to the extent possible, to strive to bring about consensus among member States. This is not a fragmented approach of confrontation, but rather a contributive and collaborative effort to bring about equality among States, based on just legal tenets.

In my view, it is indisputable that the significance of international law has increased many-fold since the establishment of the United Nations. A crystal-clear reflection of that development is such that almost every aspect of international significance is spoken in the language of law. Therefore, the indispensability of the rule of law needs to be recognized by both weaker and stronger States. It also needs to be recognized that both by general and particular interests can be realized only through the framework of the rule of law. This has been repeatedly proved in the past despite certain setbacks. However, there is a need to bridge the gap between the rhetoric and the reality.

As the Secretary-General of a regional legal organization, may I say that regional organizations are in a relatively better position to enable the United Nations to benefit from their experience and capacity on issues of common interest. They are indispensable for managing issues at the regional and national levels. Therefore, I emphasize that cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations should be guided towards strengthening the capabilities of regional organizations. In that regard, I am proud to say that relations between AALCO and the United Nations in the past many decades have grown in

strength, in consonance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. To keep pace with the changing times and requirements, I envision the two organizations expanding and diversifying their cooperation through identifying new areas. We need to enhance and consolidate cooperation between AALCO and the United Nations in general, and within the organizations of the United Nations system in particular.

As a regional organization, AALCO is dedicated to enhancing and contributing to the work of the United Nations, particularly in the field of international law and in the territory of two of the most populous continents of the world: Asia and Africa. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization now has 47 member States with a combined population of 4.2 billion. We realize that the synergy that AALCO has been able to forge with the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other international organizations contributes immensely towards one of the tasks entrusted to the General Assembly by Article 13 of the United Nations Charter: "encouraging the development of international law and its codification".

My endeavour today will primarily be to highlight the various activities carried out by AALCO over the past two years and how AALCO has contributed towards further strengthening cooperation with the United Nations.

At the recently concluded forty-third session of the organization, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 21 to 25 June 2004, AALCO had 16 items on its agenda; prior to that, at the forty-second session of the organization, held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 16 to 20 June 2003, it had 15 items on its agenda. All of those items were of contemporary relevance to international law. Owing to time constraints, it will not be possible for me to elaborate on all of those topics; however, I would like to delve into AALCO's work programme on some of those agenda items, which harmonize with the work of the United Nations system in many areas.

Consideration of the work of the International Law Commission is a statutory obligation for AALCO. Since its inception, AALCO has contributed to the work of the Commission by presenting Asian-African perspectives. Secretariat reports on the work carried out by the Commission at its sessions contribute to thoughtful deliberations at AALCO's annual sessions which are further enriched by the participation of members of the Commission. The International Law Commission recognizes the significance of AALCO's contribution, and over the years the relationship between the Commission and AALCO has become extremely tight. An important initiative in that regard was the convening of joint meetings of AALCO and the Commission in conjunction with the AALCO Legal Advisers Meeting that is held on the sidelines of General Assembly sessions. Last year, the meeting focused upon the Commission's work on the subjects of the responsibilities of international organizations, shared natural resources and jurisdictional immunities of States and their property. The joint meeting for this year is scheduled to take place on 10 November 2004, and we intend to deliberate on international liability for injurious consequences arising out of acts not prohibited by international law, diplomatic protection and shared natural resources, in particular transboundary waters. I do hope that the meeting of AALCO and the Commission on the sidelines of the current Assembly session and those to come will gain in strength and become even more beneficial for AALCO's member States.

The contribution of AALCO to the development of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is well recognized. Concepts such as exclusive economic zones and archipelagic States had their origin in AALCO deliberations. More than 20 years after the entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the law of the sea remains high on AALCO's agenda, with our work programme now focusing on developments within the institutions established by the Convention. At our most recent session, held in Bali, we also reflected upon the process of amendment of the Convention, as set out in its article 312. The resolution adopted at that session requested me, inter alia, to study the feasibility of convening a special meeting of AALCO member States for the purpose of addressing development and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Recently, we also entered into cooperative administrative arrangements with the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea for the mutual exchange of publications and to invite participation in each other's meetings.

Another important item on our work programme concerns the legal issues surrounding the Palestinian problem. AALCO has not remained oblivious to the

question of Palestine; we have been carefully monitoring it and have been updating our member States on the developments in the region for nearly 30 years now. Serious concern and condemnation of violent Israeli acts against innocent Palestinians were expressed at both the Seoul and Bali sessions of AALCO. The recent advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, declaring the construction of the wall in the occupied territory to be illegal, clearly demonstrates on which side the legal right lies.

International terrorism continues to threaten the peace and security of places where it occurs. In a globalized world, it has become easier for the perpetrators of heinous acts of terror to strike at will. Terror erupts like a volcano in different parts of the world and brings untold sorrow and suffering to all those affected, whatever their nationality. Recent attacks in the Middle East, Spain, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, India and elsewhere bear ample testimony to that fact. Words fail me in condemning the onslaught on innocent civilians. No system of law or justice can justify those acts.

The fight against terror, as many of my colleagues have said before me, cannot be fought in isolation. The sole solution lies in multilateralism. However, a definition of terrorism continues to elude the international community and that, in turn, becomes an obstacle to the elaboration of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. AALCO has been following the debate in the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee for the elaboration of a comprehensive convention on terrorism, as well as in the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee. AALCO hopes that ways and means will be found within United Nations forums to achieve consensus on the issue, so that the international community will have a firm legal foundation for taking strong measures to combat real terrorism — as one among other transnational crimes — through effective and collective international efforts. AALCO is working hard to find a draft definition for terrorism — to be sent to the Chairman of the Sixth Committee Working Group on this matter — which will hopefully help to solve this tremendous obstacle.

Let me now draw attention to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Corruption is a global problem, which poses a serious threat to the development of States and developing countries in particular. Corruption, apart from affecting the public at large, also causes reduced investment, social polarization, lack of respect for the rule of law and human rights, undemocratic practices and the diversion of funds intended for development and essential services. It also affects the ability of Governments to provide basic services to their citizens and to encourage sustainable economic, social and political development.

The United Nations Convention against Corruption is the first legally binding instrument on the issue with a global scope. It calls for States parties to enact implementing national legislation corresponding with the Convention's obligations.

One of the Convention's groundbreaking features consists of its provisions relating to the recovery of laundered State assets. The implementation of those provisions, if carried out both in letter and in spirit, will go a long way towards fostering international cooperation aimed at curbing the menace of corruption. AALCO's current work programme focuses on the compilation of national anti-corruption legislation to establish a network among law enforcement agencies and to assist member States in implementing the Convention. Plans are under way to organize a one-day special meeting on that topic during our forty-fourth session, scheduled to take place in Kenya next year — with, I hope, the active cooperation of the United Nations, its specialized agencies and the African Union.

The entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime took place in record time. The Convention, inter alia, emphasizes the role that regional organizations can play in the attainment of its objectives. AALCO is aware of the Convention's importance in fighting the menace of crimes such as drug trafficking and trafficking in persons. We have been updating our member States with regard to developments pertaining to the Convention and have been encouraging them to consider becoming parties to the Convention and its three Protocols.

In the light of the importance attached to the Convention, during the recently concluded 2004 session in Bali, a one-day special meeting on establishing cooperation against trafficking in persons, especially women and children, was convened with the full support and participation of the Government of the

Republic of Indonesia, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF and the International Organization for Migration. The Bali session mandated the secretariat with preparing model legislation to assist member States in enacting implementing legislation for the Convention. At the first session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention and Its Protocols, held in Vienna from 28 June to 9 July this year, the Organization actively participated as an observer. Views expressed by member States and panellists during that special one-day meeting were submitted for the consideration of the Conference and later adopted as a Conference document.

Under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the development of a legal regime for the international protection of expressions of folklore is in progress. Therefore, I personally proposed that member States consider including that topic on AALCO's work programme. My initiative found ready support among member States, and that topic was extensively deliberated at the Bali session for the first time. I believe that AALCO can usefully contribute to the codification process now under way in the Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore as part of the work of WIPO.

Intersessional activities are a very important element of AALCO's work programme. In cooperation with United Nations agencies, two important seminars were recently convened at our headquarters in New Delhi. In January 2003, mindful of the importance attached to children's issues, we organized jointly with UNICEF a one-day seminar on the legal protection of children under international law. The discussion was organized under the following topics: the protection of children under the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child and other related international instruments; international cooperation against trafficking in children and sex abuse; and the effective domestic implementation of children's rights and their protection through national legislation.

AALCO's refugee protection efforts — particularly the 1966 Bangkok Principles on the Status and Treatment of Refugees and its revised consolidated text of 2001 — are also well recognized. The topic of the status and treatment of refugees has been included on our work programme and agenda since 1963. In association with the UNHCR, AALCO organized a two-day seminar on strengthening refugee protection in migratory movements, held on 17 and 18 October 2003 in New Delhi. At Bali, member States entrusted me with the mandate of preparing a study, with technical and limited financial assistance from the UNHCR, entitled "Statelessness: an overview from the African, Asian and Middle East perspectives".

Those are some of the ways in which AALCO has been contributing to the purposes and principles of the United Nations. However, despite the work of the Organization, its specialized agencies and several regional organizations, the world is far from peaceful. Much remains to be done so that we can create a peaceful and prosperous world for "we the people of the United Nations". The more than 6 billion people who inhabit this planet have high hopes and aspirations that the United Nations will ensure for them a peaceful and prosperous world in which the rule of law reigns supreme.

The role of the United Nations has been commendable in developing a normative framework with respect to many fields, including economic and other relations. As I stated earlier, the common denominator of international relations should be the ability to function within the framework of a legal order that upholds the rule of law. Perhaps that task is enormous, but it is also essential. In that regard, AALCO will strive to contribute positively to the strengthening of the Organization's role by way of encouraging our member States to arrive at a consensus on issues related to international law so that we can attain the common objective of truly establishing the rule of law in international relations.

In conclusion, long ago the French Revolution adopted the famous concept "liberty, equality, fraternity". That slogan remains very valid, but I believe we should adapt it to our current needs and implement it, beginning with fraternity, which will definitely lead us to equality. That, in turn, will pave the way to a true liberty that is free from many of today's scourges. Under the banner of the United Nations, that work programme — "fraternity, equality, liberty" — will prove that the Organization remains the headquarters of peace, hope and security for we the people of the world.

The President (*spoke in French*): Before proceeding, I should like to inform members that the Assembly will take action on draft resolutions later this morning, after we have heard all the speakers in the debate. Therefore, perhaps we should try not to speak at too great a length — certainly not at greater length than the heads of State or Government spoke during the general debate.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/8 of 16 October 1991, I now give the floor to the observer of the Caribbean Community.

Mr. Mohammed (Caribbean Community): On behalf of the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community, I have the honour to make the following contribution to the debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations. As an organization bringing together 15 small developing States, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) places great importance on the United Nations as the pre-eminent multilateral instrument through which, in the words of the Secretary-General, common solutions to common problems can be sought. Consequently, the Community's continued cooperation with the United Nations is a critical aspect of its efforts to attain its objective of improving the well-being of its citizens and laying the foundation for the peaceful and sustainable development of all CARICOM member States.

In July 2003 the Caribbean Community secretariat attended the fifth high-level meeting between the United Nations Secretary-General and the heads of regional organizations. The main theme was the new challenges to international peace and security, including international terrorism. The meeting also touched on the less traditional threats such as poverty, organized crime and human rights violations, which form part of what we see as the multidimensional nature of security.

Little did we know that, a few months later, an internal political crisis in one of our member States would suddenly take on an international dimension and require the ministrations of the United Nations. In his report to the General Assembly on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations (A/59/303), dated 1 September 2004, the Secretary-General highlights the role played by the regional organization CARICOM in seeking to help the Haitian parties find a political and peaceful solution to the political impasse which would respect constitutional dictates as well as regional and hemispheric commitments, and subsequently by the United Nations in seeking to stabilize the situation.

That effort at the pacific settlement of a local dispute by a regional agency, in keeping with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, was a necessary though ultimately searing experience for the Community. Its ripples continue to be felt, and concerns linger.

CARICOM continues to devote its time, energies and limited resources to a critical list of other issues of immediate relevance to the Community.

The present situation of the Caribbean Community, and of the wider region, has been further compounded by the ravages of a series of powerful hurricanes. Several States were severely affected, but the most devastated were Haiti, Grenada and the Cayman Islands. The human toll was most tragic in Haiti, where some 2,000 persons lost their lives and over 200,000 remain without shelter. In Grenada, in a matter of a few hours, the development progress of a small but vibrant State was obliterated. That country's economic base of agriculture and services was entirely wiped out, and 90 per cent of its housing stock destroyed. This was a grim demonstration of the fact that the vulnerability of small States is not a mere concept but a stark reality that threatens this category of member States — small island developing States — of the international community.

I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to express the Community's appreciation for the solidarity displayed by the international community and by the United Nations and its specialized agencies, particularly in their initial efforts to assist those States, but also for the launching of the United Nations flash appeal for Grenada and Haiti. The various forms of assistance and emergency relief thus provided have had a multiplier effect by generously supplementing the efforts of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA), whose resources, as well as the Community's, have been stretched to the breaking point by the magnitude of the devastation.

At the same time, it is also quite clear that the Community's emergency response capacity has benefited from cooperation with the United Nations in the domain of disaster management. Over the past four years, this cooperation with the United Nations system

has taken place within the context of the development and the implementation of a framework that links disaster management to sustainable development. The application of information and communication technologies in disaster management is seen as a critical area for development.

The establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) is one of the key priorities of the Community. That undertaking seeks to create a seamless economic space by the end of 2005 allowing for the free movement of the key factors of production — persons, capital, goods and services.

New institutions will have to be established, key among which is the Caribbean Court of Justice, and new principles implemented. The Court will require enabling domestic legislation and, in some member States, constitutional amendments, a potential source of delay. Financing arrangements have been put in place to ensure the complete independence of the Court. The Regional Judicial and Legal Services Commission, established last year, has since appointed the President of the Court. In its original jurisdiction, the Court will adjudicate disputes arising from the operations of the single market and single economy.

The support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has enabled the Community to make progress in the establishment of the Court as well as to initiate a process of administrative reform at the national level. The structures and systems of governance within the Community are also under review to facilitate the workings of the CSME.

The need for a strong and vibrant single market and economy has been amply demonstrated as the region faces new challenges to its traditional export industries. The sugar industry, which has been the backbone of the economic, fiscal, social and political well-being in several of our member States, has now joined the banana industry as the latest victim of an adverse World Trade Organization (WTO) decision. The ravages of the series of hurricanes on our tourism industry also points to difficult economic times ahead. At the same time, the region is negotiating in a number of theatres for improved market opportunities and trading rules that accommodate the special circumstances of small, vulnerable economies.

In June this year, CARICOM joined in the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations institution which puts the well-being of the developing countries at the centre of its work programme. We hope that the decisions taken on that landmark occasion will be implemented to the benefit of all our peoples.

In that regard, the wise words of the outgoing Secretary-General of that institution are most pertinent:

> "In order to integrate developing countries fully into the world trading system, we need not only successful trade negotiations but we must also address what has been called the problem of the 'dark side of the moon' — the supply-side constraints".

The countries of the region have emphasized the multifaceted nature of security and have called on the international community to pursue an integrated approach in resolving the security issues affecting States. While a new emphasis has been placed on terrorism — and that concern should not be downplayed — other issues affecting the security of small States remain critical to the region's development.

Human resource development and capacity-building are seen as critical components of the Community's efforts to better position itself in the global environment by developing strategic vision, skills and knowledge and by delivering improved services and effective management. It is critical to have such capacity-building in the domain of information technology in order to bridge the digital divide. CARICOM looks forward to further cooperation with the United Nations in the area of training and knowledge management.

In the area of health, CARICOM appreciates the significant support it receives from the United Nations system, especially with respect to the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS has worked closely with the Pan-Caribbean Partnership against AIDS in the fight against that scourge, with the assistance of other donors. Important aspects of that approach have been to strengthen institutional capacity, prepare national plans for access to care and treatment for affected persons and promote the social inclusion of people living with HIV/AIDS. The Pan-Caribbean Partnership has also benefited from the support of agencies of the United Nations system through the interface with

major pharmaceutical companies to negotiate cheaper prices for antiretroviral drugs.

The Community's response to those and other issues form part of the report prepared and submitted on implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The CARICOM Secretariat wishes to express its appreciation to the United Nations Development Programme for its assistance to the region in preparing that report.

The Community is fully engaged in preparations for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, to be held in Mauritius from 10 to 14 January 2005. Much has already been said in the general debate about the importance that the CARICOM States and all small States attach to the high-level participation of all United Nations Member States in order to reaffirm the international community's political commitment to the Programme of Action and advance towards implementation of the goals established in the Programme.

The Caribbean Community looks forward with confidence to continued close collaboration with the United Nations system, which has been a supportive partner in the region's efforts to improve the well-being of its people.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/161, of 12 December 2000, I call upon the observer of the Economic Community of Central African States.

Mr. Cosme (Economic Community of Central African States) (*spoke in French*): As I am taking the floor for the first time at the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your outstanding election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session. I also congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Julian Hunte, for the manner in which he led the work of the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session.

We also express our appreciation and thanks to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the support the United Nations has lent to the process of regional integration in Africa, in particular in Central Africa. In that regard, we note with satisfaction that the latest report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations (A/59/303) stresses the need for the international community to help ECCAS to achieve economic integration and to implement its programmes for peace and security.

Sir, we are convinced that your intrinsic qualities and long experience in international affairs will ensure that, under your leadership, the General Assembly will recover the vitality that, in the past, enabled it to leave its mark on the history of the United Nations, in particular in the area of peacekeeping and in ensuring that Central Africa and the entire African continent will be well represented through you.

Sir, your election to preside over the Assembly comes only a few years after the Assembly granted ECCAS observer status under resolution 55/161 of 12 December 2000. That strengthens our conviction that the United Nations has truly integrated Central Africa as part of its priorities. In that context, ECCAS welcomes the fact that the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community have been accorded observer status in our universal Organization.

Our main objective in taking the floor in the Assembly today is to refer to the cooperation between the United Nations and Central Africa as represented by ECCAS. In that context, we recall that in June 2003, a multidisciplinary mission of the United Nations, led by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, visited our country in order to determine the main lines of a multifaceted assistance for our subregion. The Under-Secretary-General presented his report to the Security Council and, consequently, our organization would like to know what the follow-up would be to the recommendations made in his report.

Central Africa is a potentially rich region, but it continues to face armed conflicts and the even more disturbing situation resulting from the fragility of our economies and growing poverty. However, I would like to stress that significant progress has been made in restoring peace and security in our subregion. Central Africa has seen the number of its serious conflicts reduced over the last two years. Currently, only 3 of 11 countries face relatively serious crises: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chad. A short time ago, 7 of the 11 countries were suffering crises.

That encouraging trend should be followed with interest and should gain the support of the international

community in order to prevent new types of tension from arising and further destabilizing our region. This is why we should pay all due attention to the institutional crisis that affected the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe last year and to the international mercenary situation in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea during the first quarter of this year.

The ongoing border disputes and cross-border humanitarian crises such as that currently on the border between Chad and the Sudanese province of Darfur are but a few of the situations that continue to be of great concern to us. In this respect, through the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, a collective security mechanism for Central Africa, we plan to specifically emphasize the prevention of conflicts, the promotion of political dialogue and mediation, the monitoring of elections and good governance, with the hope of being able to adequately deal with peace, security and socio-economic development.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, in its 2004 report on the African economic situation, stresses that only five African countries have achieved the objective of the 7 per cent economic growth required to reduce poverty. Among those States, three are members of ECCAS, namely, Angola, Equatorial Guinea and Chad. The two others are Burkina Faso and Mozambique. Peace is thus the indispensable prerequisite for economic growth.

On a social and economic level, real efforts are being undertaken in our States, but such efforts still do not allow us to achieve the results hoped for, particularly in the fight against poverty. The unemployment rate among young people is still very high, while AIDS and malaria continue to spread and to affect the most active parts of our society. Competition among a growing population is increasingly harsh for access to resources that are less and less abundant.

In order to face these various challenges, ECCAS' highest authorities have recommended the implementation of several sectoral policies, including in the following areas: prevention and resolution of conflicts, food security, agricultural development and the environment, the development of commercial infrastructure and trade, energy, new information and communication technologies, gender, the fight against HIV/AIDS, and the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which we will be following up in Central Africa.

The implementation of these guidelines has had encouraging results in some areas, as exemplified by the ongoing fruitful dialogue among ECCAS, the United Nations and the European Union with a view to making the early warning mechanism for Central Africa operational, the progressive opening up of the borders of ECCAS member States to the citizens of other member States of the Community as part of the free circulation of persons, the launching of a free trade area on 1 July 2004 and the creation of an energy pool for Central Africa.

The challenges are enormous, certainly, but the necessary political will does exist. The priority areas identified during the recent mission of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs to ECCAS should allow us, in the long term, to provide the following: training in the collection and analysis of political information for the personnel of the operations centre of ECCAS' early warning mechanism for Central Africa; assistance and training in election supervision, so that ECCAS staff can monitor elections in member States; training in cartography, to allow ECCAS to make a decisive contribution to solving cross-border disputes among its member States; the support of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in planning the next multinational military exercise, "Bahr-el-Ghazel", which ECCAS will be organizing in 2005 in Chad; and the establishment of a subregional office of the United Nations in Central Africa to facilitate cohesion and subregional integration and put an end to conflicts affecting the subregion.

Needless to say, the assistance that we are requesting from our partners is to help Central Africa — the bridge between the other regions of the continent — become an area of peace, dialogue and prosperity, attributes which are essential in the process of integration and in Africa's development. ECCAS therefore launches an appeal to this Assembly, as we have in the past, to adopt the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and ECCAS, to be presented by the Republic of Congo, which currently holds the presidency of our Community.

Finally, we express the wish that within the general context of the reform of the United Nations, cooperation between subregional organizations and the United Nations be reinforced to a greater extent, with a

view to facilitating a more effective contribution by regional economic communities to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/5 of 8 October 1999, I now call on the acting Secretary-General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, Mr. Tugay Ulucevik.

Mr. Ulucevik (Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization): It is indeed a privilege and a singular honour for me to represent the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) at the fifty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly and to address the Assembly. At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, upon your election as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.

The foundations of BSEC were laid in 1992 as a political initiative for economic cooperation in the wake of the tremendous changes that had taken place in the world. The winds of change continue to blow at the dawn of the twenty-first century and are, indeed, becoming stronger. The process of globalization, with all its consequences, is under way.

The members of the international community are becoming increasingly interdependent in economic and technical terms. New dangers and challenges threaten them all equally. They are becoming increasingly aware that international terrorism is indiscriminate in its targets and seeks to undermine their common values. Based on their awareness that our globe is undergoing an important phase of adaptation to new realities, opportunities and challenges, the member States of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation took the historic step of transforming that political initiative into a full-fledged international organization.

Upon the ratification of its charter on 1 May 1999, BSEC was born with a legal identity on the international scene. Its Permanent International Secretariat is based in Istanbul, Turkey. With the recent accession of Serbia and Montenegro, BSEC now comprises 12 member States, with a geographical area covering the Balkans, the States bordering the Black Sea and the Caucuses.

At its fifty-fourth session, the United Nations General Assembly, through resolution 54/5 of 8 October 1999, granted observer status to BSEC, a landmark development that enabled BSEC to take its place in the family of international organizations. General Assembly resolution 55/211 of 20 December 2000, on cooperation between the United Nations and BSEC, opened up new avenues for BSEC to develop cooperation or working relationships with other organizations within the United Nations system and beyond. The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) has signed cooperation agreements with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

BSEC has also developed cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Trade Organization (WTO), World Tourism Organization and World Bank. The process of establishing a formal framework for cooperation between BSEC and the World Bank and FAO is in progress.

At this point I would like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his factual report contained in document A/59/303, which deals, inter alia, with the status of the cooperative relationship between BSEC and various United Nations organizations during 2003 and 2004. We appreciate his recommendation that the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system should continue to hold consultations with BSEC and formulate and implement joint programmes pertaining to fields of common interest.

The BSEC member States, wishing to be in a better position to meet the challenges of the era of globalization and the information age, adopted the BSEC Economic Agenda in April 2001. Its main goal is to strengthen, through a project-based approach, existing collaboration and to expand it into new fields.

The Project Development Fund was established in October 2002 in keeping with the project-based approach embodied in the BSEC Economic Agenda. Its purpose is to facilitate the development and promotion of projects involving high regional cooperation and with development impact in the BSEC region at the early stages of their conception. The Fund is constituted on the principle of voluntary contributions from the BSEC member States, the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank and other BSEC-related bodies

and BSEC observers. Contributions from outside donors are also welcomed. Following the entry into force this year of the Manual of Operations of the BSEC Project Development Fund, the project-generating mechanism of BSEC has begun operating and is showing great promise. I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to appeal to all international financial institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors and to States enjoying observer status in BSEC to explore the possibility of contributing to the activities of the BSEC Project Development Fund financially and in the form of technical assistance.

BSEC aims at contributing to regional and international peace, security, stability and welfare by developing economic and trade relations between the member States of the organization. BSEC represents a forum for discussion and cooperation on areas ranging from energy to transportation, trade and economic development, the environment, tourism, agriculture, small- and medium-sized enterprises, combating crime, terrorism, emergency relief and mitigation of the aftermath of natural and man-made disasters.

As a regional economic organization, BSEC is not directly involved in peacekeeping and conflict management. It renders its contribution to peace and security through economic cooperation and by implementing so-called soft security measures. Besides those, the Agreement among the Governments of the BSEC Participating States on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in particular in its Organized Forms and its Additional Protocol has already entered into force. The Additional Protocol on Combating Terrorism has been finalized and is expected to be signed in March 2005 in Bucharest.

On 25 June of this year the BSEC Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs met in a special session in Istanbul and adopted by consensus a statement on the BSEC contribution to security and stability. In that statement, BSEC members denounced and condemned all acts of terrorism, some of which have also been perpetrated in recent years on the territories of BSEC member States. They stated that terrorism cannot be associated with any religion, ethnic group or geographic area and that there can be no justification for terrorism whatsoever.

The entire world, and first and foremost the member States of BSEC, was shocked and deeply saddened by the dastardly act of terrorism perpetrated against children and other civilians in the Russian town of Beslan. The BSEC Chairman-in-Office, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia, promptly issued a statement on behalf of the BSEC member States and condemned in the strongest possible terms terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

We once again pay homage to the innocent victims of this and many other previous despicable acts of terrorism.

Over the past decade, the BSEC region has become an integral part of the European political and economic landscape. Moreover, the whole BSEC region has become the immediate neighbour of the enlarged European Union (EU) as of 1 May 2004. This, indeed, is a landmark development with far-reaching consequences.

At present, one BSEC member State, namely Greece, is also a member of the EU. Three other BSEC members, namely, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey will join the EU as full members in the near or not too distant future. Consequently, the boundaries of the enlarged EU will also cover a significant part of the BSEC region, including a long coastline along the Black Sea. Thus, the EU will become a major Black Sea player. Mention should also be made in this context of the fact that the Black Sea region is becoming Europe's major transportation and energy transfer corridor.

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization serves as a model of cooperation, bringing together countries belonging to different cultures and varying histories, through cooperative activities that bridge differences and develop a common vision for the future of the region. This will help BSEC assert its place and role in the new emerging European architecture.

Before concluding, I would like to thank, on behalf of my secretariat, those representatives who, in their statements on the agenda sub-item under consideration, made references to BSEC and highlighted its role, activities and relationship with the United Nations system. I wish also to pay tribute to the Permanent Mission of Georgia, representing the current Chairman-in-Office of BSEC, for initiating consultations on a draft resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly on cooperation between the United Nations and BSEC. I appeal to Members for its adoption by consensus when it comes before this body.

An action by the General Assembly based on the recommendation of the United Nations Secretary-General will give new impetus to BSEC's cooperation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies and others in the pursuit of the lofty objectives and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as those of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization. BSEC will continue to play its role with determination to strengthen multilateral cooperation to meet the global challenges of this millennium.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the General Assembly resolution 33/18 of 10 November 1978, and decision 53/453 of 18 December 1998, I now call on the observer for the International Organization of la Francophonie.

Mr. Bouabid (International Organization of la Francophonie) (*spoke in French*): The International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) has consistently sought to develop its synergy with the United Nations, given the two organizations' common objectives, complementary mandates and respective comparative advantages.

Today, at a time when the international community must reaffirm the authority of the United Nations and its capacity to act, we deem crucial any contribution to helping the United Nations attain the goals and purposes set out in the Charter. Regional organizations, including the one I have the honour of representing, have demonstrated that their particular contributions can be useful and relevant.

Last November President Abdou Diouf, Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie, made an official visit to the United Nations. He emphasized the OIF's firm commitment to multilateralism, pluralism and consultation and recalled the determination of the French-speaking community to see the United Nations play a central role in international relations.

Our cooperation with the United Nations is now well established. Its quality is being enhanced and it covers more areas, and the number of countries involved is increasing. We are pleased that the Secretary-General of the United Nations acknowledged this fact, and we are grateful to him for his personal efforts to ensure that cooperation further develops.

Several delegations have taken the floor during this debate to reiterate their satisfaction at the positive manner in which this cooperation has developed. We are grateful to them for their ongoing support, and we will continue to ask for their assistance in order to achieve even greater progress, as we all are aware that, in the final analysis, the beneficiaries of the process will be the peoples of our Member States.

Our cooperation is encompassing more and more areas: peace, security, support for democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and economic and social development. In July 2003, the OIF participated in the fifth high-level meeting of the United Nations and regional organizations on new threats to peace and security. Following up on that meeting, last April the OIF held a joint workshop with the United Nations on early warning and conflict prevention. Cooperation between our two organizations in that area is ongoing and will culminate, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General, in the holding of an international seminar on the same topic. Our objective is to elaborate agreed, practical recommendations aimed at putting in place early-warning operational procedures to help promote conflict prevention more effectively. Regional actors, including subregional organizations and civil society, will, of course, also be involved with the workshop.

The OIF provides ongoing support for the United Nations and uses the United Nations system in order better to work for peace and stability in its member States. Side by side with the United Nations and the relevant regional organizations, we are working for reconciliation and stability in many of our member countries: Comoros Islands, Côte d'Ivoire, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Haiti, where we are working with the rest of the international community to bring about a peaceful settlement and a swift return to stability and development.

Such efforts are aimed also at the mobilization of our member States aimed at their greater participation in the new peacekeeping operations established by the United Nations this year in certain French-speaking countries. Our Secretary-General, together with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, has asked the countries of the French-speaking community to make available French-speaking civilian police troops and contingents to peacekeeping operations in Haiti, Côte

d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.

The OIF welcomes its enhanced cooperation with the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs. The best practices identified at the meeting of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme, held in Paris in February 2004, on comparative electoral policies will be useful in the context of the numerous activities we are planning to undertake next year. In the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire and Haiti, we will work with the United Nations and UNDP in connection with the elections scheduled for 2005.

La Francophonie remains convinced that a more equitable world order will not be possible unless all countries are involved in the decision-making processes on the adoption of universal norms and on the evolution of globalization. We are seeking to ensure that all our member States are involved in this process, through French-speaking consultations and support for individual participation by our member countries in major global conferences, including those of the United Nations.

This year we have held consultations to prepare for the World Summit on the Information Society, the last part of which will be held in Tunisia in 2005, and for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, to be held in Mauritius next January. We are also supporting the efforts of those two French-speaking countries in order to ensure the success of the events they will be hosting.

La Francophonie, which is committed to multilateralism, is carrying out various programmes aimed at enabling our member States to participate more actively in the work of the United Nations and of other multilateral forums. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, the OIF has organized, jointly with several United Nations bodies, training courses in the economic and trade areas seeking to enhance the negotiating capacity of developing Francophone countries.

The OIF has consistently supported multilingualism in the United Nations system because we wish to see our member countries play their full part as Members of the United Nations. Our support for multilingualism represents an important aspect of our cooperation with the United Nations system. Our programme on Francophone junior professional officers, which is financed by the Intergovernmental Agency of la Francophonie, enables us directly to support the efforts of the United Nations by making available French-speaking junior professional officers to the Secretariat and to specialized agencies. We would like to thank in particular the Department of Public Information for its ongoing readiness to explore with us possibilities for cooperation to strengthen multilingualism, particularly as concerns the United Nations web site.

We welcome our strengthened cooperation with the United Nations on development. The signing of a new agreement between UNDP and the OIF enables each organization to obtain assistance from the other in the context of implementing the follow-up and assessment of projects on the ground and will certainly strengthen cooperation in various areas that will help all our member countries.

Turning to the question of sustainable development, our Energy and Environmental Institute and UNDP have been working together, making the best possible use of their respective comparative advantages, on several projects related to the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations of the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development. A new agreement is now being finalized that will create a partnership aimed at strengthening the national capacities of our developing member States, particularly in Africa, in formulating projects that could receive financing from the Global Environment Facility.

Indeed, sustainable development is a key area of our cooperation with the United Nations, particularly in Africa. For that reason, the heads of State or Government of Francophone countries will meet on 26 and 27 November in Africa — in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso — for their tenth summit on la Francophonie as a united force for sustainable development. We are certain that the outcome of that summit will lead to fresh opportunities for cooperation between the OIF and the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3369 (XXX) of 10 October 1975, I call on the observer for the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Mr. Lamani (Organization of the Islamic Conference) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is a great honour to address the General Assembly on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). I would like to convey the greetings of the Secretary-General of OIC and to wish the Assembly every success in its work at the fifty-ninth session.

As this is the first time I have addressed the General Assembly at the current session, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, and to your colleagues in the Bureau, on your elections to those high offices. We are confident that the session will be very ably directed under your leadership. I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Julian Robert Hunte, and to the members of the Bureau of the previous session, for steering the work of the Assembly so successfully during their tenure in office.

We have read with interest the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/59/303. It contains informative details pertaining to the ongoing cooperation between our two organizations during the period under review. I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for that important and valuable report and for his leadership role in enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations in areas of common concern. We also would like to commend the Secretariat for its part in the preparation of the report, which also includes contributions from other bodies of the United Nations system.

As before, the Secretary-General's report is devoted to the status of implementation of the programmes and activities in priority areas of cooperation, jointly developed by our two organizations and their respective agencies and bodies during the period under review. As the report reflects, the progress of implementation is encouraging. On behalf of the General Secretariat of the OIC and its specialized institutions, I would like to reassure the General Assembly that we remain dedicated to the joint tasks we are pursuing.

In his capacity as chairman of the OIC Group at Headquarters, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Turkey has introduced draft resolution A/59/L.12, on the subject of cooperation between the United Nations and the OIC. I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to two particularly significant operative paragraphs of that draft.

First, in operative paragraph 3, our two organizations are requested to continue to cooperate in their common search for solutions to global problems, such as questions related to international peace and security, disarmament, self-determination, decolonization, fundamental human rights, emergency relief and rehabilitation, social and economic development and technical cooperation. In that regard, we would like to affirm that we will continue to play our role in maintaining meaningful and effective contacts between our two organizations and between our respective agencies and institutions. Those contacts will continue to be strengthened through the support of the OIC offices in New York and in Geneva, and through the various OIC contact groups and committees.

Secondly, in operative paragraph 8 of the draft resolution, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system are encouraged to continue to expand their cooperation with the subsidiary organs and specialized and affiliated institutions of the OIC, particularly by negotiating cooperation agreements, and through the necessary contacts and meetings of the respective focal points for cooperation in priority areas of interest to our two organizations. That directive has obviously emerged from the encouraging reports on the outcome of cooperation among the subsidiary organs and specialized institutions of our two organizations during the period under review. We look forward to further strengthened, better-coordinated and mutually cooperative interactions among those agencies and institutions in their respective areas of interest in the future.

I shall conclude my statement, as in past years, on the same note of hope and expectation for future cooperation between our two organizations in all areas of common concern and in the best interests of our member States. While we can leave it to history to pronounce its judgement on the outcome of our cooperation, the demands of the global village, which succeeding generations will inherit, place some common responsibilities on our shoulders today. In assuming those responsibilities, we pledge to you the full and continuous cooperation and support of the OIC.

The President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on sub-items (a) to (t) of agenda item 56.

I should like to inform members that, at the request of the sponsors, action on draft resolutions A/59/L.5/Rev.1 and A/59/L.11 will be taken at a later date.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/59/L.1, L.3, L.6, L.7, L.8, L.12, as orally revised, and L.13.

Draft resolution A/59/L.1 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization". Before taking action, I would like to say that, since its introduction, Australia has joined the list of sponsors.

May I take that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.1?

Draft resolution A/59/L.1 was adopted (resolution 59/3).

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution A/59/L.3 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization". Since the introduction of draft resolution A/59/L.3, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has joined the list of sponsors.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.3?

Draft resolution A/59/L.3 was adopted (resolution 59/4).

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution A/59/L.6 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Association of South-East Asian Nations".

Since the introduction of draft resolution A/59/L.6, the following countries have joined the list of sponsors: Afghanistan, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Chile, China, Cyprus, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Gabon, Georgia, Grenada, Guinea, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Maldives, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, the United States of America, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.6?

Draft resolution A/59/L.6 was adopted (resolution 59/5).

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution A/59/L.7 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Committee for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization". Since the introduction of draft resolution A/59/L.7, the following countries have joined the list of sponsors: Croatia, Estonia, Monaco, Poland, Sweden and Ukraine.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

Against:

United States of America.

Draft resolution A/59/L.7 was adopted by 104 votes to 1 (resolution 59/6).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Maldives, Singapore and South Africa advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution A/59/L.8 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons". Since the introduction of draft resolution A/59/L.8, the following countries have joined the list of sponsors: Estonia, Germany, Greece, Monaco, Romania and Turkey.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.8?

Draft resolution A/59/L.8 was adopted (resolution 59/7).

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution A/59/L.12, as orally revised by the representative of Turkey, is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference". Since the introduction of draft resolution A/59/L.12, the following countries have joined the list of sponsors: Albania, Bahrain, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Qatar, Tunisia, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.12, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/59/L.12, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 59/8).

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/59/L.13 at this meeting. In this connection, since document A/59/L.13 was circulated in the Hall just this morning, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure.

The relevant provision of rule 78 reads:

"As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to waive that provision.

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): Draft resolution A/59/L.13 is entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/59/L.13?

Draft resolution A/59/L.13 was adopted (resolution 59/9).

The President (*spoke in French*): May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-items (b), (c), (h), (l), (m), (p), and (r) of agenda item 56?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in French*): I would like to inform members that action on draft resolutions under other sub-items of agenda item 56 will be taken at a later date.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.